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Michigan Senate urges Congress to pass bill regulating new casinos

LANSING – The Michigan Senate is urging Congress to pass a bill that would make common sense changes to federal law governing authorization or approval of new Indian casinos, announced Sen. Patty Birkholz.

In a resolution being introduced by Birkholz, the Legislature is calling for swift passage of U.S Rep. Mike Roger's "Common Sense Indian Gambling Reform Act."

"Michigan and other states need to be more involved in deciding if and where new casinos are built," said Birkholz, R-Saugatuck Township. "Casinos create undue hardship and unintended consequences on local communities and we need to put a stop to this growing gambling epidemic. I'm encouraged to see Congress take an active role in helping us prevent an influx of new casinos and urge them to pass this bill quickly."

Roger's bill would make changes to the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act, including:

- putting a stop to off-reservation tribal casinos;
- requiring the approval of both the Governor and the Legislature for new Indian casino compacts; and
- directing the Department of Interior to conduct economic impact studies to determine if new casinos would have a negative impact within a 50-square-mile radius.

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